



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VII
901 NORTH 5TH STREET
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101

JUL 19 2005

Driftless Area NWR
CCP Comment
401 Business Highway 18N
P.O. Box 460
McGregor, Iowa 52157

Dear Planning Team:

RE: Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge Draft Environmental Impact Statement
(DEIS) and Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (Plan)

Pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Regions 5 (Chicago) and 7 (Kansas City) has reviewed the referenced DEIS and Draft CCP. The DEIS and Draft CCP outlines management goals, and management actions to achieve restoration and conservation goals for the next 15 years. To address stated recovery and conservation needs, three alternatives were retained for detailed analysis. Alternative A, the no action alternative, includes no land acquisition but current habitat management would continue. Delisting would not occur for listed species. Alternative B would expand the refuge by 3400 acres and would provide minimal habitat management. Recovery for listed species would likely not occur under Alternative B. Alternative C would expand the refuge by 2275 acres and provides more active management of refuge lands and endangered species habitat. Delisting is likely to occur. Based on the information provided in this document, our Agency's review has resulted in a rating of "LO" (Lack of Objections). This "LO" rating indicates that we believe that implementation of the preferred alternative would result in minimum adverse impacts to the environment.

EPA appreciates the opportunity to review the DEIS. We request that you send our offices (Chicago and Kansas City) two (2) copies of the Final EIS at the same time that it is sent to the Office of Federal Activities (2251A), EPA, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20044.

Please contact me at, (913) 551-7148 if EPA assistance is needed, particularly with air quality aspects of prescribed burning.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Cothorn
NEPA Team Leader
Environmental Services Division